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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000985

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PINS](#) [PNAT](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: READ OUT FROM MARH 18 MCNS

REF: BAGHDAD 879

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Daniel V. Speckhard for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Maliki presided over the March
18 meeting of the Ministerial Committee for National
Security, during which:

-- Minister of State for National Security Affairs Sirwan
al-Waeli said the security crackdown in Baghdad was bringing
calm to the capital. However, the situation in the Karkh
area was grave, especially in the Dora and Saydiyah
neighborhoods of the Rashid district where militia activities
including 'assassinations and beheadings' were still very
high.

--Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani said he and Minister of
Defense Abdul Qader met with the PM-endorsed Diyala Rescue
Committee and pledged to provide additional security support
to the province.

--Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani said his ministry was
pressing forward with facility protection service reform.

--Deputy National Security Advisor Dr. Safi Al-Safaa
submitted his weapons buyback program for Baghdad proposal to
the Prime Minister and requested his approval.

--Prime Minister approved Deputy Ministerial Committee for
National Security's recommendation to transfer security
authority of Maysan Province to Iraqi control on April 18,
despite Waeli's plea to postpone the decision.

-- Minister of State for National Security Sorwan al-Waeli
outlined recommendations for addressing the Improvised
Explosive Device crisis in Iraq. END SUMMARY.

FARDH AL-QANOON

12. (C/MNF-I) Minister of State for National Security Sirwan
al-Waeli said that while security operations in Baghdad were
proving successful, the situation in Karkh was dire. He said
the neighborhoods of Dora and Saydiyah within the Rashid
district were experiencing an increase in militia activity,
including a rise in assassinations, beheadings, and
displacements. Prime Minister asked for immediate crackdown
in the area while Commander of the Joint Forces General
Babakir Badrkhan Zebari said that two Iraqi army battalions
of the 2nd Division were directed to deploy in the next day
to Karkh to address the problems.

13. (C/MNF-I) General Patraeus agreed these areas needed
attention but urged patient adherence to the plan. He said

efforts were already underway to address the Kharkh situation. In the coming days part of a newly arrived U.S. brigade was moving into the Dora area. There were also plans to take out a death squad operating in the zone. He also said the security forces planned to increase operations in Mansour and Ghazaliyah in the coming days.

¶4. (C/MNF-I) Petraeus stressed to the Prime Minister and to Babakir the importance of not moving Iraqi army units frequently around the city. He said the units were given designated locations throughout their 90 day deployments. He explained that counterinsurgency forces are most effective when they remain in the same operating locations for extended periods and can develop local contacts and exploit information.

MORE SECURITY FORCES FOR DIYALA

¶5. (C/MNF-I) Following up on last week's Diyala discussion (Baghdad 879), Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani said he and Minister of Defense Abdul Qader met with the PM-endorsed Diyala Rescue Committee. He said the committee was representative of the province, comprising members from all sects and tribes. Bolani said he and Qader pledged their assistance in helping them establish three local police battalions and in improving coordination among the security forces currently operating in Diyala.

FACILITY PROTECTION SERVICE REFORM: SLOW MOVING

¶6. (C/MNF-I) Minister of Interior Jawad Bolani said his ministry was pressing forward with facility protection

BAGHDAD 00000985 002 OF 002

service reform. He estimated the service would likely be reduced by 75%. He stressed the need for cross-ministry support especially in terms of ensuring compensation and employment opportunities for the thousands of members that would be released from the service. He requested that the Minister of Finance transfer the FPS budget to the MoI so that he could better control these forces.

¶7. (C/MNF-I) Minister of Finance Bayan Jabr pressed Bolani for a list of the names of the 'estimated 40,000 ghost employees' of the FPS so he can adjust funding allocations. He also asked for a clear date when he should transfer FPS funding to the MOI rather than individual ministries as he is currently doing. Bolani admitted he still did not know the exact number of FPS members or the number of legitimate versus illegitimate employees. Once all are identified, his ministry will begin vetting them. He called for patience and cautioned that stopping salary payment before the reform process was complete would be disastrous for security. The Prime Minister asked the ministers for a follow-up report on the FPS situation.

WEAPONS BUYBACK PROGRAM SUBMITTED TO PM

¶8. (C/MNF-I) Deputy National Security Advisor Dr. Safi Al-Safaa submitted his Baghdad weapons buyback program proposal to Maliki and requested his approval. No one raised concerns or objected to the plan, including Jabr who had strongly objected to the program in previous discussions. (Baghdad 879) The other regular critic of the buyback program, Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Salaam Zawba'i was not in attendance this week. The PM said that he will sign the appropriate Executive Order.

MAYSAN APPROVED FOR TRANSFER

¶9. (C/MNF-I) Safaa told Maliki that based on February provincial assessments, Maysan had met the necessary criteria

for transfer to Iraqi provincial control and the Joint Committee for the Transfer of Security Responsibility (JCTSR) recommends transfer on April 18. Maliki welcomed the news and agreed to the transfer date of April 18.

¶10. (C/MNF-I) Waeli cautioned Maliki against approval, saying several provincial council members had reported to him an increase in instability and violence in Maysan. As evidence Waeli cited the statistic of 'seven assassinations in past four days' and an increase in 'fighting in the streets.' Waeli also advised against transfer until a permanent provincial police chief was appointed and actually serving in the job. Maliki disregarded the advice, agreeing instead with Bolani in saying the transfer was based on an overall assessment. The incidents reported by Waeli were isolated events and only based on the role of one person.

Waeli's Study on IEDs

¶11. (C/MNF-I) MSNS Waeli said his office had conducted a study on Improvised Explosive Device proliferation in Iraq that concluded with recommendations for addressing the IED crisis in Iraq. He said the GOI could begin addressing the problem by improving the security of state owned manufacturing companies and weapons depots. He also recommended consulting with expert scientists who may be able to assist in developing counter-measures against the proliferation of IEDs. Maliki agreed with the concept and asked which ministry would take charge. Waeli said his office was willing to implement the recommendations but Maliki said this seemed unreasonable since Waeli has neither security forces nor FPS within his organization.

KHALILZAD